eventually held in March, 1938, under a changed electoral law which permitted married women to vote but forbade candidates to run as members of the old political parties. In May, 1938, the *sobranie* met for the first time since 1935, but found itself reduced to the position of a consulting body.

The political crises of the period after 1933 were but outward expressions of the serious economic condition in which Bulgaria, along with all other predominantly agrarian countries of eastern Europe, had found itself as a result of the world-wide economic depression. At the same time both Italy and Germany sought to bring Bulgaria into their political and economic orbits. Bulgaria for several years seemed to waver between them and their rivals in power politics. Although its refusal to join the Balkan Entente, because of its revisionist territorial claims, seemed to align Bulgaria with Italy, a tense situation was avoided by the signature of a Pact of Friendship with Yugoslavia on January 24, 1937. In 1938 when the east European atmosphere had become clouded because of Germany's annexation of Austria and the developing Munich crisis, Bulgaria gained recognition of the right to rearm by means of an agreement in July with Greece who acted on behalf of the Balkan Entente. This was followed by an Anglo-French loan amounting to ten million dollars to assist in Bulgarian rearmament, although Germany had already supplied much material toward this end. Nevertheless, Germany had two advantages over its rivals. One was its freedom to encourage Bulgarian revisionist ambitions which, after the Bulgar-Yugoslav pact, tended to create greatest tension with Romania over the Dobruja. The other was the powerful economic tie developed between the two countries by means of trade agreements. After Austria and part of Czechoslovakia had been incorporated in the Nazi Reich in 1939 about 52 per cent of Bulgaria's exports went to Germany and about 63 per cent of its imports came from there.

It is doubtful, however, if the developing ties with Germany influenced the feelings of the Bulgarian people. Tsar Boris and his governments, even though they sanctioned agreements by which the political police cooperated with the Gestapo in pursuing "Communists," sought to keep down native fascism. There was, moreover, very little antisemitism in Bulgaria. The political opposition composed of the former Agrarian, Liberal, Radical, Socialist, and Democratic party elements, was by its nature antagonistic to Nazism. And, finally, the people had always retained a deepseated feeling of sympathy and respect for Russia against whom the Nazis were ostensibly aligned. Indeed, right down to 1941 there was much ground for believing that Bulgaria might well maintain neutrality in the second World War.

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The War of 1939-1945

Jockeying for Position

When the European war broke out in September, 1939, the conditions in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were not dissimilar. In each country a semi-dictatorial government, primarily responsible to the monarch, ruled with the assent of a subservient parliament. The predominantly agrarian masses were discontented with both political and economic conditions but were inarticulate and ineffectively organized. While all former political parties had been officially dissolved, their members continued to carry on a half-concealed activity beneath the eyes of the censor and the political police. The economy of each country was tied, in the main, to Germany's; although in Bulgaria, Great Britain and France made a pretense at counteracting German influences, they had apparently abandoned Yugoslavia to the Axis. In foreign relations both governments officially pursued a policy of neutrality, while their ministers and rulers made open or surreptitious visits to Hitler or his henchmen. German "tourists" ceaselessly worked in each country for the benefit of the German Reich.

Beneath the surface, however, there were forces which caused Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to take different courses when the crucial test came. In Yugoslavia resistance to collaboration with the Axis sprang up the minute the government capitulated. In Bulgaria, on the other hand, the government was able to swing the country into the Axis camp and keep it there until the triumph of the United Nations and particularly Russia made it clear that the Axis was losing the war.

As late as February, 1940, the Bulgarian government[5] assured the members of the Balkan Entente that it would not press its revisionist claims while the war lasted. With the dismemberment of Romania, however, in the summer of 1940, Bulgaria considered itself absolved of this pledge and in September obtained Southern Dobruja, thus regaining the boundary of 1912. Although Romania and Hungary were persuaded in November to adhere to the Tripartite Pact of Germany, Italy, and Japan, and despite the fact that over 80 per cent of Bulgaria's trade was now being carried on with Germany, the tsar and his government refused to join the Axis. Russia, whose agreement with the Reich in August, 1939, had undoubtedly helped to confuse the Bulgarian people, may have had something to do

[5] In well-managed elections, January, 1940, the government obtained a *sobranje* composed of 140 supporters and 20 opponents of whom 9 were Communists. A new government, organized on February 16, was headed by Bogdan Filov who remained premier until he entered the Regency Council in September, 1943.

1: Lee H-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1
Yugoslavia EF1

Y 648 fusing to attend the conference called at Paris to consider the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction, Yugoslavia manifested her determination to stand by Soviet Russia economically as well as politically.

The Fatherland Front in Bulgaria

B 642 648 665 In attempting to fulfill the terms of the armistice and to prepare for parliamentary elections, the Georgiev government in Bulgaria, like that of Tito in Yugoslavia, was accused of pursuing totalitarian tactics. The United States and Great Britain entered protests against the conduct of the elections of November, 1945, in which 88 per cent of the vote was reported to be in favor of the Fatherland Front. The effort of the two powers to bring about the admission to the government of two representatives of "other democratic groups" proved unavailing, despite the agreement of Soviet Russia to the proposal at the Moscow Conference in December. [666] The National Assembly which chose Vassil Kolarov, a Communist, to be its president, arranged for a plebiscite, September 9, 1946, on the form of government. When the results went overwhelmingly in favor of a republic, the Assembly on September 15, declared Bulgaria to be a People's Republic. Elections in October, following the drafting of a constitution, returned an Assembly less predominantly Communist than Yugoslavia's, though whether this outcome was designed or came about because of a failure to crush the opposition effectively is not clear. The Fatherland Front majority of 366 deputies was made up of 279 Communists (Workers' Party), sixty-nine dissident Agrarians, nine *Zveno* members, eight dissident Social Democrats, and one Radical; while the opposition of 99 was composed of ninety Agrarians under the leadership of Petkov, and nine Social Democrats led by Lelchev.[10] In November Georgiev resigned as premier and was succeeded by Georgi Dimitrov, an eminent Communist who had been made famous by the Reichstag Fire Trial in 1934 and had been living in Russia until the end of the war. Like Yugoslavia, Bulgaria had entered upon the path of a Soviet-orientated state.

Peacemaking and Foreign Relations

Y-B 648 Beginning with the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco in 1945, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, whenever represented or discussed at international conferences, have been led or supported by Soviet Russia. Thus they are both aligned with the "Eastern"

[10] For a brief description of the elections and the policies of the Dimitrov regime by a sympathetic observer, see Commander Edgar P. Young, "'People's Republic Bulgaria'," *Contemporary Review*, CLXXI (March, 1947), 162-66.

2:Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

642 666 vibrant youth and living hope, her fling at democracy failed, primarily because ballots were given to peasants who were not being taught the meaning of citizenship in a national state.

178 623 Those interested in democracy have much to learn from the story of government in Dragalevtsy. At the outset the informal rule of the elders, which had been recognized by the Turks, was replaced by a commune or *obshtina* with regularly elected officials. At first these units included a number of villages. By 1890 the increase in population necessitated the breaking up of the larger *obshtini* so as to include only two or three villages. In other words, the pendulum was swinging back in the direction of greater local control, the swing being further accentuated after the First World War.

● 665 Political parties grew like mushrooms in Bulgaria. In 1930 the country had more than sixteen significant parties; in the village of Dragalevtsy, with its total population of about sixteen hundred, there [557] were six important parties with recognized leaders and platforms. To be a party leader in the village meant added prestige; to be one in the city or on a national scale meant power. In order for a Dragalevtsy man to become a local party leader he had to be acquainted with important people in Sofia. Even though he had only one influential friend in the city, he could persuade this man to come out and help organize a party. Other peasants were invited to the organizational meeting and officers were elected. Naturally, the one who took the initiative would be chosen to an important post. Because of the multiplicity of parties and the intense strife among them, many people throughout the country breathed a sigh of relief when the authoritarian government, which came into power on May 19, 1934, abolished by decree all political parties and started the practice of appointing university graduates as mayors in villages. This meant that the head of the government in a village was not dependent upon the will of the populace but had to produce results satisfactory to the officials over him. The breakdown of the party system was associated, especially as far as the conservative peasant population was concerned, not only with forces outside the village but also with the failure of popular education to develop into "a bulwark of people rule."

2:Sanders E-5 (-o date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

[661] munists, they were traitors. The priest still considered them children 668 of God and officiated anyway, although they were not buried in the local cemetery.

[665] By the New Year, 1945, many of the political leaders in the 648 Fatherland Front discerned the handwriting on the wall. The Agrarians and the Democratic party especially recognized the Front for what it was—a Communist screen for actual control. All the while, the Communists—a minority party—had been growing stronger and were nurtured by the Red Army officers who really directed Bulgarian affairs. British and American army officers were represented in the Allied Control Commission which was under arbitrary Russian direction. American and British diplomatic representatives were somewhat more effectual, but only within a rather limited sphere of activity. With the cards stacked in their favor, the Communists controlled the key ministries, chief among them being the Ministry of Interior which had charge of the police and local administration. Therefore, early in 1945 there was a gradual loss of popular enthusiasm for the Fatherland Front, with the real defection coming in May. At that time the leading representatives of the Agrarian and Democratic parties, as well as a section of the Socialist party, withdrew from the Front to form an opposition. In Dragalevtsy, this move met with tremendous support, for there the Agrarian was the major party. The Zveno group, which had engineered the *coup d'état* of 1934 against the king, stayed with the Fatherland Front in which they held the premiership and other prominent positions.

A few former acquaintances of mine had joined the Communist party and were sincerely trying to win their fellow countrymen to their cause. They were inclined to be impatient with those who differed from them, and still felt very much on the defensive. Their condescending attitude toward members of other parties co-operating with them in the Fatherland Front was expressed in a comment making the round: "Oh, these other members of the Front are our water boys.' They'll carry the water to the top of the hill for us and then we'll take it over."

[666] The next political crisis arose in August, 1945. The government had scheduled an election through which it had planned to obtain a

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The Communist experiment with Bulgaria is now ten years old. The evidence at hand is deemed more than sufficient for substantiating a case, with particular regard to labor law and relations.

In analyzing our primary source of evidence—Bulgaria's labor legislation—a sequence of important premises should be constantly borne in mind. The Bulgarian Communist Party, which is the one and only element of power, has fully subscribed to the theory and practice of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It has termed its form of government a "people's democracy" which "fulfills the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat."[5] According to Lenin, the dictatorship of the proletariat represents "a power limited by nothing, by no law, directly based on violence."[6] It is, therefore, difficult, if at all possible, to take even Communist legislation at its face value, when it is known that the law is not binding on the highest repository of power—the Communist Party and government. Still, the existing legislation can be safely considered as the expression of a "minimum of violence" (the way toward the maximum being left open) and, as such, will necessarily reflect the guiding principles of Bulgarian labor law and relations.

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Another important premise is the Communist identification of party and government with the "working class" and the establishment of government ownership over capital and means of production. From labor's point of view, this situation means that in practice the workers are employees of a single owner—the Communist government—yet in theory are owners of their place of work and employers of themselves. This obvious nonsense has a definite purpose: to make impossible any "contrast" between capital and labor and, thus, to place the whole labor force under absolute governmental control. That is why "strike" is an unknown term in Communist labor law (you cannot strike against yourself), its equivalent having been identified as a capital

(Footnote 4 continued)
insufficiently clarified. For details, see Michael Padev, *Dimitrov Wastes No Bullets* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1948), Ch. VI; William B. King and Frank O'Brien, *The Balkans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), pp. 157-159; and author's study cited at footnote 3, pp. 11-14.

[5] Georgi Dimitrov, *Political Report to the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party* (Sofia: 1949), in Bulgarian, p. 123.

[6] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow: 1930), Vol. 9, Second Russian Edition, p. 95, in Russian.

[7] Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria of 1947, full English translation in Andrew Gyorgy, *Governments of Danubian Europe* (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1949), Appendix, pp. 323-339.

11: Logio S-4 (no date) 1936 EEI Bulgaria EEI

THE POLITICAL PARTIES

•665 The attempt of Stoilov to merge into one body all the opponents of Stambulov did not meet with success.[1] The various groups were too heterogeneous to coalesce, and the national or popular party into which they had been fused, soon broke up again into its constituent elements.

It was in the Constituent Assembly of 1879 that the first manifestations of differences of opinion took place. One group headed by the clergy, and those who had received a more advanced education, or had lived abroad, such as Natsevitch, Grekov, Balabanov, Burmov and Stoilov, advocated the granting of more restrained rights to the people, the adoption of a property or educative qualification for electors, and the creation of a senate. These were opposed by Karavelov, Dragan Tsankov, and Stambulov, all of whom insisted on the people being endowed with full sovereign rights without any restrictions whatever. They were supported by the revolutionaries, teachers, functionaries and the mass of the people and completely dominated the assembly, as they were both more numerous and more noisy than the few educated and more refined conservatively minded individuals who opposed them. It is this multitudinous mass, which styled itself Liberal, that was responsible for the adoption of a Constitution extremely liberal in form, which was soon to prove both inappropriate and unworkable.

These two groups originally designated as Conservatives and Liberals, soon broke up into a multiplicity of fractions, bitterly opposed one to another, and incapable of co-operation except for the sole purpose of overthrowing the party which happened to be in office. In 1884 the first scission was recorded in the Liberal ranks, giving rise to two parties led respectively by Karavelov and

[1] [For historical background of this period see Cat. 116, pp. 324-351 — Ed.]

665 Dragan Tsankov. The former was to become known subsequently as the Democratic party under the leadership of Malinov, while the latter assumed the title of Progressive with Danev at its head. After the dethronement of Prince Alexander and when Karavelov was unjustly cast into prison his followers split up into two sections, one headed by Stambulov, and the other by Radoslavov. The first group styling itself national-liberal, and the second liberal. The latter was soon to give birth to an offshoot in the form of the so-styled Young Liberal party under Tontchev.

All these three groups were characterised by their anti-Russian attitude, and by their utter disregard of constitutional methods. They hesitated at nothing in order to secure their return to power, and whenever they were in office and their organs supervised the election, they were distinguished by extreme acts of brutality and violence. They were several times indicted and condemned for illegalities and embezzlements, but always amnestied because ex-Tsar Ferdinand found in them the most subservient of tools wherewith to carry on his personal policy; for unable to depend on popular support they were obliged to seek that of the Crown, which they elicited through their abject servility. The programmes of these three groups had no fundamental differences and they co-operated whenever Ferdinand expressed such a desire.

The reason for the inordinate subdivision of Bulgarian parties was the desire of the politicians to secure Ministerial seats. As the number of such posts was limited, whenever a group grew to have an undue number of aspirants to these honours which it could not satisfy simultaneously, it split and a readjustment was effected based on a more equitable proportion of the number of posts and favours available for distribution to the number of candidates enrolled in the party. This

•665 fissiparous tendency was naturally greatly encouraged formerly by Ferdinand, who was not slow to realise that the weakening of the political parties and their mutual hostilities constituted the best guarantee for the maintenance of his dominating position in the country.

Party spirit was extremely virulent and political intrigue had no limits; antagonism between political parties and politicians was bitter and uncompromising because their conflicts were not due to divergences in ideals, but mainly caused by sordid material interests or personal animosity. The mainspring of political activity consisted in the quest of well paid posts and sinecures which provided means for amassing fortunes. Such base and narrow aims engendered venomous rivalries and mortal envies, because politicians aware of the motives which impelled them, could hardly ascribe to their antagonists any higher aims, which could command respect. As Dr. Seton-Watson remarked very appropriately in his „Europe in the Melting-pot, p. 358:

„The secret of Ferdinand's power has lain in his skill in calculating the psychological moment for driving each batch of swine from the trough of power and still more in his policy, pursued with a relentless and uncanny mastery of detail, of supervising their diet".

What rendered these politicians still more contemptible, was their readiness to hire themselves indiscriminately to the service of any foreign bidder. A foreign bank or industrial establishment would appoint a prominent politician as director or legal adviser, and in exchange for the emoluments he received, he would lend his support and that of his party to further the interests of the institution, however these might clash with those of his wretched country. Though a law had been enacted forbidding deputies to participate in the management of enterprises likely to have dealings with the State, the law was seldom respected. M. Tsolakov-Zarin, a former director of the

National Bank, in one of his numerous writings („Dans le tourbillon de la Haute Spoliation") cites several cases of infringement by prominent members of the Democratic party. 665

The leadership of the National or popular party was assumed by I. E, Gueshov after Stoilov's death, and its foreign policy was characterised by a moderate friendship for Russia. Some of its prominent members were the veteran politicians, M. Madjarov, St. Bobtchev and the late T. Todorov. Political parties in Bulgaria were, prior to the war, mainly distinguished by the measure of sympathy or suspicion they professed for Russia. The Democratic party avowed itself equally Russophile, but was more amenable to Court influence and on occasions ready to follow a pro-Austrian policy at the request of Ferdinand. In a public address its leader had declared to Ferdinand that he was the party's load star and that its programme could be summarised in the following words: „With you, by you, and for you."Some of its best known members were. Malinov. the late Liaptchev, Mushanov, Dr. Ghirghinov, and Stefanov.

While the Democratic party was still presided over by Karavelov, its most idealistic followers seceded on a question of principle and formed the Radical party, which together with the Socialists, formed what may be styled as the „ginger" groups in the Sobranye, Both, leaders and rank and file of this party were distinguished by their integrity and idealism. Its founder, Naitso Tsanov, was the noblest political figure Bulgaria possessed, and his attractive and kindly personality was assisted by powerful gifts of reasoning and exposition. He was the only politician who declared that he would refuse to accept office from Ferdinand if this request did not emanate also from a majority in the Chamber. He never wearied in his scathing condemnation of the arbitrary and unconstitutional acts of

•665 Ferdinand, but in spite of the exemplary attitude of its leaders, the Radical party failed to attract the masses to its orbit, because it was always opposed to the practice followed by the other parties, which promised favours and offices in advance to those who would support them at the elections and secure their return to power. The existence of the Radical party proves that it was not for lack of leaders that parliamentarism failed in Bulgaria, but owing to the unwillingness or inability of the masses to perceive where their true interests lay. They preferred to sell their votes to the higher bidder, and naturally it was the bigger demagogues who imposed themselves by their cleverness and astuteness. M. Naitso Tsanov was supported by some very able colleagues among whom were, Ilia Gheorgov, Stoyan Kosturkov, Dr. Patev, Anghel Stankov, G. T. Vlaikov and Ivan Kepov, the distinguished writers, Dr. Burilkov, the president of the Temperance League, Peter Todorov, former Minister of Finance, and one of the most promising young intellectuals and parliamentarians, Prof. G. P. Ghenov. It is sad to reflect that the centrifugal forces so conspicuous in Bulgarian politics, made themselves felt even among this group of idealists, and that dissent was not always absent from their ranks. Discord, the cardinal vice in Bulgarian politics could not be eradicated even among those whose programme was based on harmony and co-operation and who were the pioneers of true democracy in Bulgaria. And if this most progressive and idealistic party succumbed to this canker, one may justly infer that the democratic form of government is not the appropriate one to the Bulgarian temperament.

The Progressive party led by Danev was distinguished by its extreme Russophilism. „We have no secrets from Russia". Danev used to affirm, he however, does not seem to have kept consistently to this principle at the time of the Balkan wars and this would go a long way to explain

the disaster which followed and which made him then declare that his „policy had gone bankrupt".

Just as the despotism of Stambulov brought into being the Socialist party, so the oppressive measures adopted by the Radoslavov, or Liberal party, caused while it was in power during the years 1899/1901, the formation of the Agrarian. The Radoslavov Government unable to raise a foreign loan attempted to introduce anew the tithe in 1900. The country had suffered from a series of bad harvests during the preceding years, and the peasantry was expecting to make up for its losses by the abundant harvest of 1900 when it learnt to its consternation that the government had decided to divest it of the fruits of its labour. Incited by the Opposition parties the peasantry rose in several districts and the Government had recourse to violence in order to crush the outbreaks. The disorders which ensued caused such indignation that the Cabinet had to resign. Having thus taken cognizance of its force, the peasantry started to organise itself under the guidance of certain teachers, like D. Draghiev, Tsanko Bakalov and Zabunov. Despised, exploited, imposed upon by the political parties, which only thought of the peasantry when elections were approaching in order to wrest from them their votes throught the most misleading promises and ensnaring artifices, the peasantry attempted to free itself from this political and economic servitude by creating an organisation which would defend its rights. At first it was in the form of a strictly professional or syndicalist organisation, aiming at the defence of the interests of the rural population, and it did not at all aim at securing office. Their desiderata were: the curtailment of the growing powers of the Crown, retrenchment and economy in all branches of the administration, the disbanding of the army, the creation in its stead of a militia and the relinquishment of Ferdinand's Imperialistic policy. So long as the move-

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ment was in control of Draghiev, a man of the most austere morality, and leading the life of a Christian apostle, the agrarian movement could be regarded as the most hopeful portend in the public life of the country, as it seemed capable of regenerating the body politic by the eventual dominating position which the Agrarian party would have obtained owing to its vast numerical preponderance. Draghiev, and some of those who seconded him, like St. Montchev, were protestants, and lived a life of Spartan simplicity and of exemplary virtue, which enabled Draghiev to exert, owing to the respect and prestige he enjoyed, a strict discipline on his followers. Unfortunately when the world war broke out, the Entente Powers attempted to suborn some of the Agrarian deputies by commissioning them to buy up the wheat supply on their behalf. The cupidity of these peasant deputies having been aroused, it continued to be exploited by the then Radoslavov Government, with the object of enlisting their support. Those among the Agrarians who had had dealings with the Entente agent, Des Closiéres, were threatened with being courtmartialed if they would not agree to support the Government, while if they did not show themselves recalcitrant, they were offered opportunities for participating in profitable speculations. Intimidation and cupidity thus brought about disintegration in the party. The Spartan Draghiev refused to tolerate these manifest infractions of the moral principles and rigorous discipline he had imposed on the party, and finding himself in a minority seceded and established a new party. Though many of the inculpated members offered to make amends, Draghiev was adamant and refused to readmit them to the fold, declaring that after their moral degradation they could no longer represent the Agrarian organisation and that their fall should be judged by the Party Congress at the end of the war.

A party tribunal was in fact set up, and it passed severe sentences on those inculpated. Had the verdicts been upheld, the Agrarian party, cleansed of all tainted elements might have proved a decisive factor in regenerating public life in Bulgaria. Unfortunately Stambuliiski, the former secretary of the party, who had been imprisoned during the war, and who was making capital out of his incarceration by assuming the aureole of a martyr, thought it opportune to make use of his influence to mitigate these sentences in order to gain the support of the incriminated members and of their sympathisers, and oust Draghiev and his adherents from the party. This unhappily was achieved, and the Agrarian party having thrown overboard its moral ballast, rapidly degenerated into an organisation of professional office-seekers and demagogues, who while in office outdid all their predecessors in the committal of excesses and abuses. All right-thinking men in Bulgaria are at one in admitting that the Agrarian regime of Stambuliiski completed the work of demoralisation introduced by Ferdinand, and that the havoc and devastation it has caused are such that the work of moral recuperation now requires superhuman energies if it is to be tackled with some chance of success. When after Stambuliiski's death, Draghiev was approached and invited by the Agrarians to re-organise the party, he blankly refused to have anything further to do with them, declaring in their faces that they were:

> Without Christian and civic consciousness, that they placed above all their personal ambitions, interests and happiness, and that if Stambuliiski was gone, new adventurers were ready to spring up from among their ranks rendering his immixture in their affairs superfluous."

The autocratic regime of Stambulov brought into being in 1890 the Socialist party, the founders of which were Sakuzov and Blagoev. They initiated a spirited campaign

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against the dictatorial methods in vogue at the time, and rallied a large number of intellectuals around them. The doctrine of Karl Marx, however, was not appropriate to Bulgarian conditions owing to the lack of an industrial proletariat. In its absence, the Socialists attempted to recruit adherents from among the State functionaries. The class which showed the greatest proneness to support this movement was the teaching profession which embraced the new doctrine with enthusiasm and became fanatical votaries of this new gospel. These well meaning but uncritical enthusiasts in their zeal to spread their new faith met with the stolid opposition and incredulity of the peasant mass, among whom they lived, and to whom these strange new doctrines appeared more than heretical. In order to make these tenets acceptable to the mass it was thought that the best method was to undermine existing beliefs and traditions, and the teachers thus began sowing the seeds of disintegration instead of working for the awakening and consolidation of the national consciousness. They heaped ridicule and abuse on the Church, the State and such „bourgeois" conceptions as duty and morality, and thereby contributed to arouse the suspicion and hatred of the peasantry for all intellectuals. Even among the urban working classes, the influence of the Socialists was nefarious, for they endeavoured to indoctrinate their supporters with a savage hatred for the bourgeois, denouncing the present order and holding it up to execration as the only obstacle to the realisation of the messianic conditions which were to prevail on the advent of the Socialist State. The adoption of such wild beliefs by an uncritical and uneducated mass had on the whole a disintegrating effect on the nation, and though most of the leaders of the Socialist movement hold leading places among the elite of the Bulgarian intelligentsia, they were too far removed above

the level of the mass of their supporters to make themselves understood. They rather chose to leave the task of guiding their partisans to the more demagogically inclined among them, who excelled in the art of invective, and abuse [1] while they themselves reserved their exertions for parliamentary work. In this their activity was both commendable and fruitful, and their criticisms mostly opportune, and helped to raise the general level of the debates in the Sobranye. Sakuzov and his colleagues, Dr. Djidrov, Assen Tsankov, and Yannulov have equally distinguished themselves in the literary field, especially Dr. Djidrov who is the editor of one of the leading Bulgarian reviews on economics. Other prominent adherents of the party were Pastuhov and Kazazov, the latter having played a prominent part in the coup d'etat of June 9, 1923 and having since persistently worked for a rapprochement between his country and Yugoslavia, owing to which he has now been fittingly appointed Bulgarian Minister at Belgrade. Long before the suppression of the parliamentary regime in Bulgaria, dislocation set in among the ranks of the Socialists and its most prominent members seceded from the party, which was weakened to such an extent that it practically ceased to exert any influence on politics. Already in 1903, a cleavage had taken place in the party and the more doctrinaire partisans seceded to form the group of the so-called „Narrow" socialists under Blagoev, and who gradually merged themselves with the communists. Their influence from every point

[1] This explains how campaigns of slander and diffamation against political opponents who were on the whole respectable, were often indulged in by the Socialist party, though they often ended to the clear injury of the initiators. The most resounding one, was the electoral campaign against Prof. P. Stoyanov, a radical candidate, when the Socialists did not hesitate to publish on the eve of the election a forged letter purporting to be his, giving him no time to dispel the imputations levelled at him.

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of view was disastrous, for instead of lending their support to the more progressive elements in the country, they sided with the most disreputable, in order to enhance disorder and dissatisfaction and thereby hasten the advent of the proletarian revolution.

"The worse, the better for us", seemed to have been their motto. The impact of these advanced doctrines on half-cultured and uncritical minds has been most detrimental to the latter. They consider themselves as outright enemies of the community within which they live and they work for its destruction instead of for its advancement, and this forces the authorities to deal drastically with these fanatics. Their ranks were swollen by a large proportion of the teaching profession and of the lower grades of public functionaries. In the revolutionary outbreak of September 1923, over 1000 teachers joined the revolutionary bands. M. D. Kazazov, who for a short time acted as Minister of Railways, declared in the Sobranye on February 27, 1925 that prior to the revolutionary outbreak of September 1923, the railways and the telegraphs were in complete control of the communist party and that some 700 functionaries had to be dismissed from these State departments owing to their fanaticism which rendered them unreliable. Many among the teachers, and even women teachers, are fanatical converts of communism. One often hears of teachers who forbid their pupils to read the works of the poet Vazov, as being too patriotic, or who make blasphemous discourses to the students. One should not feel surprised at the astounding spread of Communism in Bulgaria, because all idealistically minded young people have nothing else to turn to. The corruption, venality and debasement of the political parties repelled all but the most prosaic. The only other focus of attraction, the Radical party, abstained from all misleading propaganda, and instead of holding out the

lure of an early advent to power, openly prepared for a long peregrination in the wilderness, which was enough to benumb the enthusiasm of the less intrepid. The intensive propaganda carried on by the Russian Bolsheviki, the close relations existing between Bulgarian Communist leaders and their Russian colleagues[1], the similarity of the language, and the immense influence which Russian literature has exerted on the Bulgarian intelligentsia for generations, makes the Bulgarians the most promising adepts of Bolshevism. Except for a mere handful of the well-off, all the rest of the people are either fervently hoping for the advent of Bolshevism or indifferent to its coming. They are convinced that the present system has brought only disillusion; Bolshevism, even if it did not improve matters could hardly make them worse, and it would certainly bring in its wake a much needed relief, that o the emancipation of a third of the Bulgarian people from the intolerable foreign servitude it has been placed under. The existing 'Bourgeois' regime has no countervailing attraction to offer. Maladministration, crushing taxation, and exploitation, not only by the local pillars of the bourgeoisie, but also by the representatives of the Western States. French bondholders extort from the starving Bulgarian peasant five times more for what he owes them than they are permitted to exact from their own co-nationals. And this crying injustice is complacently looked upon by the League of Nations, which equally tolerates the persecution and victimisation of the Bulgarian minorities incorporated in the adjoining Balkan States, despite the Treaties which

[1] One of the moving spirits of the Russian revolution was the Bulgarian Rakovski. The Russian *Pravda* recently affirmed that there were over 600 Bulgarians occupying responsible posts in the Russian administration among whom may be cited, Stomaniakov, assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Telalov, adviser of the Soviet Minister in China, Peitchev and Petrunov, secretaries of the Soviet Legations in Paris and London etc.

11: Logio S-4 (no date) 1936 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

guarantee certain elementary human rights, the enjoyment of which the League of Nations has never attempted to secure for these minorities.

At the elections of 1931, in spite of the fact that the Communist party had been outlawed and the endless persecution it was exposed to, yet it succeeded in sending 12% of the deputies elected to the Sobranye camouflaged as working men.

The extreme wretchedness of the bulk of the nation and the mass of destitute refugees have created new foci for Communist proselytism, and the country is to-day literally honeycombed with Bolshevism which only awaits a favourable opportunity to break out. Until quite recently, Communism was openly professed to be the coming form of government, and both peasant families and bourgeois, hastened alike to enroll officially some of their members in this party in order to secure an eventual protector on its advent which was considered imminent.

FERDINAND AT THE HELM

Having with the support of the united Opposition got rid of the man who brough him to Bulgaria and who consolidated his throne, and having in turn made use of its services in order to reconcile himself with Russia, Ferdinand hastened to sow discord and suspicion among the members of the Stoilov Cabinet, so as to get rid of them now that with their help he had achieved his purpose. He thus intrigued against Gueshov, Madjarov and Stoilov, complaining alternatively to each of his other colleagues, using insinuations, slander and insult.[1]

In 1899 Grekov was entrusted with the formation of a new Ministry with the support of the Radoslavovists who far outnumbered his adherents. At the elections the Rado-

[1] Cf. V. T. Veltchev's: „Pages of our new political history".

head of youthful peasant converts and set about capturing municipalities, evicting the mayors and proclaiming the commune in anticipation of the advent of the Russians who never came. Considerable damage was caused and some 3,000 were killed in this outbreak. Some 2,500 of those who participated in these risings had fled into Yugoslavia and persisted in carrying on an active agitation against the Tsankov Government which was continually provoked by an underhand campaign conducted by both Agrarians and Communists. M. Malinov, who was the leader of the legal Opposition in the Sobranye, far from criticising Tsankov for the measures he took to repress this agitation, on the contrary approved them. Speaking in the Sobranye on September 10, 1924 about a manifesto circulated by the Communists and Agrarians in which a new insurrection to be followed by an irruption of the political refugees in Yugoslavia was being preached, he affirmed that this was a provocation and a challenge which no Government could allow to pass unheeded and that it ought to be taken up and drastically dealt with. The Socialist leader Sakuzov who followed, fully agreed with Malinov and admitted that the policy of repression adopted by the Government had been forced upon it by the Agrarians.

The Government was now giving all its attention to the merging of all the political parties into one, that of the Democratic Entente. But in so doing they overlooked the necessity of sifting the wheat from the chaff and allowed the incorporation in the newly created political amalgam, of compromised politicians who prevented it from coalescing into a workable entity, and whose presence moreover, obstructed the inclusion of a certain number of more idealistically disposed politicians who refused to co-operate with these discredited individuals. As a result, the much-striven after unity was only temporarily and partially attained. The Democratic, Radical, and Socialist parties continued to

665 subsist, though, in a weakened form, their individuality having been sucked out of them as several of their members transferred their allegiance to the Democratic Entente, into which other political parties with a worse record, allowed themselves to be wholly absorbed as they had little chance of surviving as distinct entities. This effort of Tsankov to rejuvenate parliamentarism by creating a new political force miscarried. Since it only succeeded in forming a desiccated body without a soul which was nothing else save a combination of interests and appetites. It dealt a fatal blow to the existing democratic forces by undermining the stability of such existing political parties as the Democrats, Radicals and Socialists, which it had taken half a century of efforts to develop, and which, on the whole, were promising political forces. The Government dissolved the Communist party in 1924 and declared it illegal, forcing thereby its activities into underground channels. Both Agrarians and Communists were now openly receiving subsidies from Yugoslavia and they started a campaign against the Macedonian organisation, assassinating its famous leader, Todor Alexandrov, on August, 1924. Retaliatory murders followed and prominent Communists were executed by the Macedonians. The Communisst, and Agrarians constituted a common front and organised brigand bands which terrorised the country, amply supplied with arms and money from Russia and Yugoslavia. The official organ of the Agrarians, the *Zemledelsko Znome*, which was now being published in Yugoslavia early in June began inserting incendiary articles foretelling the near outbreak of a revolution in Bulgaria and inviting Tsar Boris to leave the country. The police was helpless to put a stop to the prevailing terrorism, the intensity of which may be gauged by General Russev's, (The Minister of the Interior) declaration in the Sobranye on June 17, 1924: „I walk in the streets of Sofia with the same feeling

669

666 to the majoritarian voting system being in use. There were only three districts in which it obtained clear majorities, the Rustchuk, Shumen and Plovdiv regions, in which large Moslem populations exist which invariably vote for the Government. In 1931 the mandate of the Chamber was expiring. Liaptchev felt that his Government needed new blood, and Malinov was approached and sounded as to an eventual co-operation. He demanded five ministerial portfolios. This was deemed too much. After protracted bargaining, Liaptchev was entrusted by Tsar Boris to supervise the new elections timed to be held on June 21, 1931, much to the annoyance of the general public which desired that a neutral, or coalition government, should be specially nominated to superintend this function in order that the national will might find expression and not be falsified by the usual electoral artifices and malpractices in vogue. The elections much to the surprise of all concerned, proved a success to the four Opposition parties which united to fight in common, namely the Agrarians, Democrats, Liberals and Radicals, their common lists secured the majority of the poll, the Democratic Entente was beaten, and made way for a government presided over by Malinov and later by Mushanov.

• 665 The advent of the new coalition government was hailed by all as a great triumph of the democratic forces and great hopes were raised. It was not fit, however, for team work and from the first it became evident that it was divided against itself by fundamental and unbridgeable divergences. The Democrats and Radicals though differing on the economic programme (the former favouring the maintenance of the existing high protective dues, the latter their revision, for the purpose of bringing prices down to the level of agricultural produce) could, had they been by themselves, have co-operated harmoniously and done much to restore order in the administration. In the eyes of the

more orthodox members of these two parties, the election pact concluded with the Agrarians and Liberals was looked at askance. There were even Radicals who seceded from their party rather than co-operate with the discredited Liberals, whose former leader was the abhorred Radoslavov. The views of the Agrarians on the now predominant economic questions coincided with those of the Radicals, while those of the Liberals were identical with the opinions of the Democrats. But there was another basic notion which radically separated Democrats and Radicals, from Agrarian and Liberals. The two former parties had a certain conception of their duties and at least made some efforts to govern decently and honestly, the latter two however, were out for loot and made no pretence about the aims which actuated them. The groups were too miscellaneous in origin, too self-seeking and rotten by private animosities and had neither the internal nor the external discipline required to make good their promises to the electorate. The post of Minister of Justice devolved on a Liberal and within a year there were grave complaints of his tampering with the course of Justice, formulated by the unions of judges, and by that of the legal profession. An Opposition deputy, M. Dumanov interpellated the government on December 22, 1932, and the scandals revealed were so grave, that the incriminated Minister was forced to resign. He was replaced by another Liberal, who refused to deviate from the line of conduct of his predecessor, and naturally, recriminations and complaints were not slow to appear. (Cf. *Mir* 7. VI. 1933, 13. IX. 1933 and 10. X. 1933).

The Liberals soon split up into three antagonistic fractions owing to their inability to divide equitably the spoils they derived from such offices as they occupied. Those who had been ousted from office were waging a surreptitious campaign against their nominal colleagues,

11: Logio S-4 (no date) 1936 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

661 665 even going to the extent of plotting with the Opposition to bring about the fall of the Cabinet. The Agrarians from the first were divided into some five groups, three of which published party newspapers called the *Zemledelsko Zname*, and each of which pretended to be the official organ of this splintered up party. A bitter and uncompromising campaign was being conducted among the warring fractions. Some Agrarians were openly in receipt of subsidies from Yugoslavia and France, and endeavouring to foist on the country a policy which was considered anti-national. One of the Agrarian leaders Obov, was accused of receiving 100,000 francs monthly from France. The most revolting and scandalous exposures were daily being made as to the activities of the Agrarians by their mutually antagonistic Press. The most disgusting tales were circulated which completely undermined the prestige of the Government. The Agrarian Ministers had accepted a gift of 800,000 leva for the election campaign from Obov and K. Todorov, who for years had been at the service of the Yugoslav government, but when they secured their nomination to office, they turned their backs on these donators[1]. They were no longer needed now that they could

[1] Most of these Agrarians politicians seem to form the scum of the community. After Stamboliiski's fall they went abroad and worked in close intelligence with their country's enemies. As revealed in the Sobranye in November 1927, they accepted 5 million drachmae from the Greeks, promising in exchange that when they would seize power they would renounce the Bulgarian claim to an outlet on the Aegean. Later they transferred their activities to Belgrade living there at the expense of the Yugoslav Government which utilised them to foment troubles in Bulgaria. A letter was read in the Sobranye on Dec. 24, 1931 purporting to be written by the brother of Obov to a murdered Opposition deputy in 1924, and which contained the following remarks: „Before we return to Sofia many of our prominent adversaries will be killed. It will be well if you wrote us what persons we must murder... I want from you a list of persons who have to be murdered, numbers of Sofia garrison, police etc...

dabble unchecked in the State coffers. A scathing exposure of one of the Agrarian Ministers, appeared in the Belgrade *Politika* on June 16, 1933 which was widely reproduced in the Bulgarian Press. 661 665.

Virgil Dimov was accused of having concluded a pact with the Macedonian Committee, promising to reverse the pro-Serbian policy hitherto followed by the Agrarian organisation and to adopt a strictly nationalistic one, such as was approved of by Italy. In exchange he and his friends would receive, the support of the Macedonians, and subsidies from a foreign country, Italy. He was further accused of having in a very short time amassed a considerable fortune. This scandal reached its culmination on November 10, 1933, when the president of the Sobranye, N. Zachariev, another Agrarian, rose up and declared: „I was a colleague of V. Dimov, who was a poor man. But for two years he has been a minister and to-day he is a millionaire. I can no longer associate with these people". All attempts to maintain a semblance of unity disappeared, the Agrarians threatened to force a new election campaign by overthrowing the Government and proceeded accordingly to work up the peasant electorate, inciting it to avoid paying taxes and promising to absolve it from such payments if the Agrarians were returned. A final attempt was made to maintain the tottering Cabinet by throwing over the Radical Minister Kosturkov and dividing among Agrarians and Liberals the emoluments and benefits which this additional ministry would assure to its occupants. Democracy had deteriorated to such a degree that it became a farse and a make-belief,

we must destroy this government and create a friendly Bulgaria ... and a confederation with Serbia". The most revolting revelations were made concerning all the colleagues of the late Stambuliiski in the Sobranye on Jan. 4, 1932.

11: Logic S-4 (no date) 1936 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

665 111 which no one could further trust. One of the leading Sofia newspapers, the *Mir*, wrote on May 12, 1934 :

„In Bulgaria there is no longer any State authority. At the head of the State are puny uncultured people who destroy and are incapable of constructing. And all these petty personalities are asking for more offices, more ministerial porfolios, more public funds for their political friends. Our Government is not a democracy, but purely and simply an organisation of marauding bands. The patient and submissive citizen asks how long will this state of affairs last?

668 701 Against this canker of demoralisation the reserve officers, the only organised and patriotic force in the country, had several times protested and drawn the attention of the Government. They dispatched a deputation on January 18, 1933 to the Prime Minister recommending the adoption of certain measures which would curtail existing abuses. At the end of April 1933, they held a congress and they passed a resolution appealing to all men of goodwill to group themselves together and form a non-party government which might extricate the country from the bog in which it was wallowing. In another congress held at the end of 1933, they again insisted on the formation of a non-party Cabinet in order that the people might be saved from the prevailing demoralisalion which had set in among the political parties. These reminders however, had been disregarded.

When in May 1934, the Radical member of the Cabinet was so rudely unhorsed by his colleagues, it became apparent that the Mushanov Cabinet was at the end of its tether. There were only two political forces powerful enough to replace it. The Agrarians, and Tsankov's Democratic Entente. They were utterly hostile to one another and each intent on excluding its rival from all participation in office. The advent of either to power meant the outbreak of a civil war, more bitter than that which had been waged in 1925. To prevent this calamity, the

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

XVII

BULGARIA CONTAMINATED

> Great are your achievements, Comrade Kostov, as the builder of the Party, as the teacher and instructor of the Party members. Under your leadership and inspired by your heroic life, thousands of Communists were educated into unquestionable loyalty to the Party.
>
> Declaration by the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party on Traicho Kostov's 50th birthday in 1947

ONLY a month after the Greek rebel radio announced that Markos had been liquidated, victim of a fatal inability to forget that he was a Greek as well as a Communist, the Bulgarian Communist Party was forced to admit that nationalist symptoms had appeared in its ranks also. The sufferer was the Deputy Premier of Bulgaria, Traicho Kostov, Secretary-General of the Party since 1944. On March 27, 1949, he was deprived of his office and dismissed from the Politburo. We have been supplied with a full Stalinist diagnosis of his case.

Kostov had been a member of the Party since 1919, had spent fourteen years in Bulgarian prisons, had been Bulgaria's leading Communist organizer and would have seemed as immune to criticism on the score of discipline and orthodoxy as Georgi Dimitrov himself, chief Bulgarian émigré in Moscow, hero of the Reichstag fire trial and former Secretary-General of the Comintern. It was to Dimitrov that Kostov relinquished control in 1945 when Dimitrov returned to Sofia in the wake of the Red Army; and Dimitrov made him one of his trusted lieutenants, as Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the economic and financial planning committee. Kostov

8: Armstrong 8-4 (no date) 1961 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

665
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wrote the Constitution of 1947, the Party pamphlets and the Five Year Plan. As things turned out, the most risky of his functions was planning and administering the national economy, for it involved making Bulgaria a service station for the Soviet economic machine. But this danger was not apparent at first. Kostov's long years of hazardous service in the underground, the intensity of his Communist faith and Dimitrov's affection and favor combined to make him the Number 2 man in the régime, and when Dimitrov became ill his mantle fell naturally enough on Kostov as Acting Prime Minister.

It was from this pinnacle of power that Kostov was toppled in March 1949. The grounds for his expulsion from the Politburo and his removal as Acting Prime Minister were "gross political and Party errors," "insincere and unfriendly policy regarding the Soviet Union" and "nationalistic deviations." On April 15, the news leaked out that Dimitrov had been sent to Russia "on leave" to repair his health. The Prime Minister's illness had evidently inaugurated a struggle for his succession. At the right moment the Kremlin issued its orders. Kostov, leader of the wing of the Party that had been more closely identified with the revolutionary struggle inside the country than with the international headquarters in Moscow, was dismissed and disgraced, and Vassil Kolarov, an elderly man of 73 who had spent most of the time since the twenties in Moscow, part of it as an official of the Comintern, became Acting Prime Minister in his place. Subsequently, Kostov was removed from the Central Committee of the Party, then from his position as a deputy in Parliament, and finally from the Party itself. On July 20 Parliament voted to have him indicted and tried for "economic sabotage."

Kolarov explained that his predecessor's crimes were particularly atrocious since they were not haphazard but formed "a system of political mistakes based on a glaringly expressed nationalist deviationism and anti-Bolshevik attitude towards the methods of Party leadership." Specifically, during the time that Kostov was acting as Prime Minister he had broadened the law against divulging state secrets and had applied it to the officials dealing with the Soviet trade representatives in Bulgaria; as a result, the Soviet agents had

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

665
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not been able to find out at what prices Bulgaria was selling her products to capitalist countries. In this way Kostov revealed his mistrust of the U.S.S.R. and went counter to the accepted rule that "secrets and commercialism" do not figure in Bulgarian-Soviet relations. A man's attitude toward the Soviet Union, Kolarov explained, defines his whole ideological orientation; anti-Sovietism is "the most heinous form of national deviation." [1]

The reader will recall that when opposition to the Soviets appeared in Poland it was dealt with at first quite circumspectly. Gomulka's connection with Tito was carefully concealed. Nothing of the sort was attempted in Kostov's case. By now the Cominform acknowledged that Titoism was not peculiar to Jugoslavia but was an infectious disease menacing the whole Stalinist empire.

439

The events which awakened Kostov's resistance were like those which had antagonized other satellite leaders. In 1948 the Bulgarian tobacco crop amounted to about 20 million kilos, of which the Soviets bought between 18 and 19 million kilos at arbitrarily fixed prices. When the time came for Bulgaria to market what remained of her crop, after the Soviets had taken the lion's share and after she had provided for her own domestic consumption, she found that she was competing in Italy, Egypt and New York with her own Bulgarian tobacco, offered by the Soviets at less than prevailing world prices. The Soviets profited in the same way with attar of roses, of which Bulgaria possesses almost a world monopoly. The Soviet purchasing agents in Sofia bought up the entire 1948 crop and resold it at higher prices in New York.[2] Later they laid hands on the store of this valuable essence accumulated during the war by the Bulgarian National Bank and disposed of it at whatever prices the world market would stand. Kostov apparently could not bear to see his country cheated in this way. In one sense it does not matter that the sums which the Soviet Government credits to the Bulgarian Government for its purchases in Bulgaria bear no relationship to the prices at which it later resells those same products abroad; it is all a matter of bookkeeping anyway, and Bulgaria cannot win. What does matter is that as the Soviet Government resells in hard-cur-

[1] *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!*, Bucharest, May 15, 1949.
[2] *The Economist*, London, July 16, 1949.

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

439 rency areas, the dollars which it gets from the sale of Bulgarian products go to finance imports not into Bulgaria but into the Soviet Union. That ends the last vestige of Bulgaria's freedom of economic manœuvre.

Bukharin might have called this sort of finagle the absence of "selfish competition," just as Kolarov called it the absence of "secrets and commercialism." Kostov decided that it was good old-fashioned exploitation, the sort of thing which he had always heard denounced as a mean capitalist trick. When he tried to tighten up the government agencies which dealt with the Soviet purchasing agents, however, he found that he was a "nationalist deviationist."

665 661 The Sofia morning papers of November 30, 1949, carried the text of the formal indictment against Kostov,[3] based on a 32,000-word statement purporting to have been signed by him in prison and on similar statements by ten codefendants, all of them high government and Party officials. Kostov is described as a consistent supporter of "Left-sectarian," Trotskyite policies. While an émigré in Moscow in 1933–34 he supposedly formed contacts with many other Trotskyites, including Bela Kun and Tito; plotted to replace Dimitrov and Kolarov as leaders of the Bulgarian Communist Party; and, as an official of the Balkan Secretariat of Communist Parties, recommended Tito for political work in Jugoslavia. All this seems vague and farfetched, no reason being given why with such a consistently bad record he was allowed to continue as Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Party and was promoted to be acting head of the government.

The indictment goes on to make the bland statement that when Germany's "final defeat" had been sealed on the Soviet front as far back as 1942 (*sic*), the British and American intelligence services, faced with this apparently unwelcome fact, and seeing how Soviet prestige was growing in Southeastern Europe, began to smuggle their agents into the underground Communist Party. Among those allegedly recruited besides Kostov was a former Minister of Finance, Stefanov, who was accused of having given the British information on the budget and on military expenditures in 1946 and 1947, and

[3] A translation in English is to be found in a supplement to the *New Times*, Moscow, December 7, 1949.

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

Nikola Pavlov, former administrative secretary of the Politburo and Deputy Minister of Construction. These three were accused of having formed a "conspiratorial center" aimed at "overthrowing the lawful government of the country and replacing it by a criminal government headed by Kostov." The indictment also asserted that they had "endeavored to disrupt business, commercial and other economic ties between Bulgaria and the other People's Democracies headed by the Soviet Union, in order to deprive our country of the generous and disinterested aid of the U.S.S.R."

Of special interest is the further charge that Kostov "entered into secret criminal connections with Jugoslav leaders" with the intention of "depriving Bulgaria of her national sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence by joining her to Jugoslavia." The "plot" for a federation is supposed to have begun when Kardelj, as already recounted, visited Sofia towards the end of 1944. Dimitrov was still in Moscow, Kostov was the undisputed leader on the spot and it was with him that Kardelj discussed the pros and cons of the project. The indictment admits that Kostov made no secret of this; he "informed the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party, which he headed in 1944, that Kardelj had been in the country and had suggested a federation between Bulgaria and Jugoslavia," as well as that the Jugoslavs would submit a written proposal to this effect shortly. What he failed to tell his colleagues, says the indictment, was that the arrangement "was directed against the U.S.S.R." According to the indictment, Kardelj told Kostov that "the British and Americans had supplied the Jugoslav guerrillas with arms and ammunition on condition that, when the war was over, Tito would keep Jugoslavia away from the U.S.S.R.;" that in Tito's view Jugoslavia should "not definitely tie herself with the U.S.S.R., but should pursue a policy of her own and maintain and develop ties with the Western states;" that he would request withdrawal of Russian troops as soon as the war was over; that Soviet troops should leave Bulgaria too; and that the best means of bringing this about would be for Bulgaria to join Jugoslavia immediately, for then she would no longer be regarded as an enemy but as part of an Allied state, which would make the presence of Soviet troops on her soil "superfluous and entirely unjustified." Kostov contended that he had expressed

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

665
661

doubts about all this, giving among other reasons his opinion that the Allies might oppose the idea of federation; and in fact the British Government did issue a formal warning that Bulgaria could not take any independent action until after there had been a treaty of peace. On this point the indictment merely mentions Kardelj's comment that if Allied protests were made they would be window-dressing. The project failed in the end, the indictment concludes, because of a warning sent by Dimitrov from Moscow.

In the summer of 1946, Kostov was sent on a formal visit of friendship to Belgrade on behalf of the Bulgarian Communist Party and is supposed to have used the opportunity to continue his subversive work. Alexander Rankovich, Jugoslav Minister of the Interior, is alleged to have talked with him about Tito's plan to create "a great comity of Southeastern European countries," while Tito himself spoke approvingly of the idea of a federation which "would dictate its will in the Balkans, and would represent a serious factor in international politics." The plot supposedly was carried further when Tito came to Sofia in November 1947 to sign the treaty of friendship. On this occasion, it was alleged, he urged Kostov to reorganize the Bulgarian Communist Party, form a new government and proclaim the union with Jugoslavia. If he found he needed help, Tito is supposed to have said, the Jugoslav Army stood ready to supply it, and since the help would be "within the framework of the federation," it would be a domestic affair and "no one could qualify it as an act of aggression."

Such, said the indictment, was the "criminal conspiracy against the state of Bulgaria, plotted and headed by Kostov." Before examining the evidence we might note that on their face some of the Bulgarian Government's contentions seemed improbable. Kardelj had reported that Kostov was very reserved on the federation question, indeed much more reserved about it than Dimitrov and the others. And Tito has asserted that he always distrusted Kostov as the most anti-Jugoslav of all the Bulgarian leaders. This would indicate that although Kostov's complaint against Moscow was similar to Tito's, he did not support Tito in the Cominform dispute. In September 1948, in fact, he strongly attacked Tito and his col-

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia EEI Bulgaria EEI

B 665 661

leagues; but of course he may simply have been endeavoring to offset criticisms being voiced against him by Party colleagues.

The trial was held in December 1949 in accordance with a new law, passed for the purpose, before a new court, set up for the purpose and from which there was no appeal. The sensation of the trial, and something new for Communist judges, was that Kostov in open court repudiated the confession which he was alleged to have signed in prison. The whole case against him was based on that confession and on the similar confessions of the other defendants. These did not revoke what they had said in jail but instead fell over themselves to confirm the worst of it and to find new grounds to inculpate both Kostov and themselves. While Kostov did not hide the fact that he had opposed Dimitrov in ideological and Party matters, or that he had miscalculated the strength of *kulaks* and other Bulgarian reactionary elements, he did categorically deny that he had ever been a spy or foreign agent, that he had had anything to do with sending Tito to Jugoslavia in 1934 or that he had been Tito's stooge in the negotiations for a Jugoslav-Bulgarian federation.

The judges at first could not believe their ears, and when Kostov insisted on repudiating his "confession" in spite of hoots from the audience and rebukes by his own counsel, they hastily adjourned court for half an hour to enable him to "rest" and "refresh his memory." After the rest period he still stuck to his guns. For two days the Communist press maintained a stunned silence. Then *Pravda* commented that Kostov had a "soft and oily voice" and the "cunning eyes of a thief," details which his colleagues might have noticed in the last twenty or thirty years, and a "bent back," which *Pravda* did not bother to explain he had acquired in 1924 when he jumped from a window in attempting to escape torture by the Sofia police.[4]

B 648 Y 648

The account of the negotiations for a Bulgarian-Jugoslav federation produced at the Kostov trial omits many well known facts and runs contrary to many others. Nothing is said about the active and

[4] *Cf. The Economist*, London, December 24, 1949; for details of the trial see also *The New York Times*, December 8 and successive days.

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia EF1
Bulgaria EF1

has since told why.[8] In February and early March of 1948 Kardelj and Djilas were in Moscow trying to speed up Soviet economic aid. A Bulgarian delegation was there at the same time, headed by Dimitrov, Kolarov and Kostov. "In the presence of that delegation," asserts Tito, "Stalin himself imperatively demanded the immediate conclusion of an act of federation between Jugoslavia and Bulgaria, while on the other hand the Soviet was against a federation with Albania." But in view of the fact that Jugoslav relations with the Soviet Union "were already strained" Tito looked on this renewal of the old plan with a fishy eye. "We came to the conclusion," he continues, "that the demand was put forward in order to facilitate the overthrow and subjugation of Jugoslavia."

Speaking of this matter with me, Tito explained that the creation of a Jugoslav-Bulgarian federation would have brought many Bulgarian leaders to Belgrade. Some would have received high places in the new joint government, and as they would have been under Russian orders Moscow would in this way have received a direct voice in Jugoslav affairs. He already was subject to so many kinds of Soviet interference that he was unwilling to open new doors for it. In any case, he added, not he but Dimitrov had taken the initiative for a federation to include Rumania and perhaps even Czechoslovakia. Dimitrov was unhappy over Bulgaria's increasing dependence on the Soviet Union and hoped to reverse the process by finding a place for her in a strong grouping. To a question as to why Dimitrov had not realized that this would get him into difficulties in Moscow, Tito replied that Dimitrov had just been in Bucharest, where his head had been turned a bit by the enthusiastic reception which he received from the Rumanian Communists and by the discovery that they too were restive under the tight Soviet rein. As a result, said Tito, Dimitrov became a bit too daring. Whether Dimitrov suffered physical punishment will never be known. He died in Russia in the summer of 1949 and Stalin stood among the honor guard by his catafalque.

Of all these matters no word was said at Kostov's trial. On December 14, 1949, he was found guilty on all charges and sentenced to death. The ten other defendants had tearfully inculpated both

[8] Tito's speech at the opening of the Jugoslav National Assembly, April 26, 1950 (*Yugoslav Fortnightly*, Belgrade, May 5, 1950).

[ff. the account of the negotiation for a Bulgarian-Yugoslav federation, see cat. 116, pp. 205-209 --- Analyst]

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EEI

665
661

him and themselves in every imaginable sort of crime against the Bulgarian state, the Bulgarian Communist Party and, worst of all, the Soviet Union. They received prison sentences and fines. Kostov, according to witnesses, took the verdict calmly. It was the second time he had heard a death sentence pronounced against him, the first having been in 1942 when a royal Bulgarian military court ordered him shot for resistance to the Germans. This time the sentence was carried out. He was hanged on December 16, and the next day the Sofia press carried the text of a new "confession." There was of course no way of verifying it. It seems wildly improbable that after being sentenced Kostov would have recanted, even under torture, what he had previously maintained under torture and the threat of death.

A day after this show of Communist justice the electors of Bulgaria gathered in their polling places, decorated with pictures of Stalin, Bulgarian flags and doves of peace, to take part in national "elections." These had been scheduled for November but delayed to give time for the complete elimination of "Kostovism"—called "nothing but Titoism on Bulgarian soil" by Kostov's successor, Deputy Prime Minister Vulko Chervenkov (described to me by an American diplomat as "the most rigid and unintelligent of the Bulgarian Communists, with a neck like a bull and a face like a bullfrog"). As there was only a single list of candidates, the news that this list had been elected was not startling.

As good as any of the obituaries for Kostov was one inserted by Pijade in the speech already quoted: "If Traicho Kostov was hanged merely for wanting a federation with Jugoslavia, although he insisted on precisely the same form of federation, with Bulgarian hegemony, as all the other members of the Bulgarian Politburo, then, from their standpoint, from the standpoint of the indictment of that shocking trial, they have hanged an innocent man. But though they did hang a certain Kostov, the truth about the federation of the Southern Slavs cannot be hanged. Neither the hangman in Sofia nor his teachers are tall enough for that."

B: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EP1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

XVIII

PRESCRIPTION: FORCE

Faceless as water, naked as the dust.
Stephen Vincent Benét, "Litany for Dictatorship"

DICTATORS — and other demagogues when they are able—divert their publics from real miseries by denouncing foreign machinations, staging spectacular parades, sports shows, funerals and rallies, and starting witch hunts which always end in the conviction of an enemy, real or fictitious. We have no way of knowing how much this motive may have entered into the Kostov affair. He may have become genuinely troublesome to Moscow, and the decision to liquidate him may have been taken on grounds which are logical to a dictator and even to the victim, he having accepted the hazards of the game from the start. But even if Kostov was merely a scapegoat, he deserves and will receive no tears. His noose was made from the same rope that he had ordered used for so many others.

The terror started by the Bulgarian Communists against their rivals and opponents after the war was really ferocious, even for Communists and even by Balkan standards; and Kostov was in the lead in planning the hangings and shootings. Official Bulgarian reports state that by March 25, 1945, there had already been 131 political trials, at which over 10,000 persons had been found guilty, of whom over 2,000 had been executed.[1] Among them there certainly were Nazi collaborationists, but there also were anti-Communists of every stripe, including some who had been the bravest leaders of the anti-Nazi resistance and were the strongest surviving exponents of free and democratic government. In practice, collaborationists

[1] Statistics issued by G. Dimitrov, October 7, 1945, quoted by Albert A. Brandt, *Harper's Magazine*, December 1947.

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia EF1
Bulgaria EE1

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usually fared better in the "People's Courts" than liberals; having compromised successfully with one dictatorial régime they knew how to compromise with another to save their skins.

The Agrarians, Socialists and others had joined with the Communists in forming the "Fatherland Front" to take over from the Nazis. It was a mistake—the same mistake being made by liberals in all countries of supposing that they could collaborate on fair terms with Communists. The Bulgarian democratic elements also erred in not recognizing that American and British policy in the Balkans was chaotic and could not be depended upon after the war to prevent the spread of Soviet power in Eastern Europe. The first to pay for these mistakes were the leaders of the old Agrarian Party founded by the peasant hero, Alexander Stambuliski. As they had always worked to raise peasant living standards within the framework of the general welfare, they were the most dangerous rivals of the Communists and became their first targets. The head of the Party, Dr. G. M. Dimitrov, ceded his place to Nikola Petkov under Soviet pressure in January 1945 and escaped abroad. Petkov, who had been one of the four signers of the 1944 armistice, still trusted the word of the Communists that the Fatherland Front would be a real coalition and that the Agrarians would be permitted to carry on independent political activity. He was executed September 23, 1947. The State Department protested that his trial was a "travesty on justice" and contrary to the rights guaranteed to Bulgarian citizens at Yalta. Kostov personally prepared the case against Petkov.

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With the last of the powerful and avowed opponents of dictatorship out of the way, the Communists were free to proclaim Bulgaria a one-party state. They did so on February 4, 1948, securing for their country the honor of being the first satellite to abandon the pretense of a popular front. This was the period, one recalls, when Dimitrov was being rebuked by *Pravda* for favoring a Balkan or Danubian federation, and was issuing his denials, and when Moscow was beginning to talk secretly inside the Cominform about expelling Tito. The connection of these events is not to be missed.

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Ordinarily Dimitrov might not have gotten off so lightly, but there were reasons for not sullying the name of such a great Communist luminary, the hero of the Reichstag fire trial, at the very moment

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia EF1
Bulgaria EE1

B 665 Y 665

when another Communist of world-wide repute was headed for disgrace. Some do not agree that Dimitrov was probably informed of Tito's impending fate and allowed to save himself by disavowing the policies to which Moscow objected. I have even heard it said that Dimitrov was Moscow's agent-provocateur, deliberately luring Tito to destruction. The official Jugoslav view, however, is that Dimitrov may have been weak but that he meant well. Mosha Pijade has written that Dimitrov was "the only man among the leaders of the Bulgarian Communist Party who sincerely wished for brotherly relations with Jugoslavia." [2] He also has told of an incident when Dimitrov was passing through Belgrade early in April 1948, that is, some little time before the Tito affair was finally thrashed out in the Cominform. Pijade says that Dimitrov "told us to 'remain steadfast.' " In Belgrade I heard some details of this meeting, which took place in the Bulgarian Prime Minister's sleeping car on a siding at Topchider, a Belgrade suburb. Dimitrov supposedly said to Djilas, the Jugoslav participant: "Tito must stand firm or we shall all be lost." Djilas referred to Dimitrov's weak behavior in the recent federation crisis and asked whether he would knuckle under again to Moscow on the question of the right of Communist nations to develop along their own lines. Would he "stand firm" for Tito while Tito was "standing firm" for the others? Though Dimitrov appears not to have made a direct answer to this, the current Jugoslav view is that if Dimitrov had been in good health he would have taken a stronger stand. The Jugoslavs assume as a matter of course that even if Dimitrov was not quietly liquidated while "regaining his health" in the Soviet Union his death certainly was hastened by the grilling he received there. Tito himself attributes Dimitrov's subservient attitude toward Moscow not only to his broken health but to the fact that Bulgaria's geographical and military position is so weak in comparison to Jugoslavia's.

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Obviously the Jugoslavs have much to gain by making out that a Marxist theologian of Dimitrov's eminence was on their side, but their liking for him seems quite spontaneous—in contrast to their dislike of Kostov, at any rate, whom they always considered an enemy. To emphasize that Dimitrov remains a hero to all pure Com-

[2] *Borba*, Belgrade, September 29, 1949.

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia EF1
Bulgaria EE1

munists, meaning of course those who think like the true-blue Communists of Jugoslavia, and to show that he is not to be glorified only by Stalin and his lackeys, the Jugoslav Government has changed the name of a town in eastern Serbia from Tsaribrod to Dimitrovgrad.

Regardless of any trouble that Kostov's nationalism may really have made for the Soviets, marking him in any case for prompt liquidation, there was a so-to-speak impersonal reason for starting proceedings against him—namely, that a political *divertissement* of some sort was greatly needed at the moment and that he was eminent enough to draw everybody's attention as a prisoner in the box. What could be a more piquant warning to other Communists who might secretly share his views than the sight of their old Party mentor writhing under the prosecutor's relentless invective and of course in the end crumpling up in a helpless panic of self-inculpation? But a more general reason for staging a public spectacle was that the revolution was lagging in Bulgaria as in the other East European satellites, and Moscow had decreed a speed-up in socialization measures and a "cleansing" of Communist Parties.

The impact of the new line was especially severe in Bulgaria, which was the satellite state where Stalin was determined that full success should come first. Dimitrov indicated this in a speech on December 16, 1948, when he raised the sights of the Bulgarian revolutionary movement to a degree which possibly startled his hearers, Party leaders assembled from all over the country, for it was the first time that the Cominform program adopted in consequence of Tito's defection had been placed squarely before them. The speech, which in typewritten form fills nearly eighty pages, had as its theme the real meaning of a "people's democracy."

Just after the war, said Dimitrov, the Bulgarian revolution had been in a transitional phase. The "armed people's uprising" of September 1944 had succeeded, with "the decisive aid of the heroic Red Army," in wresting control from "the capitalist bourgeoisie and the Monarcho-Fascist minority of exploiters," but "the old bourgeois state machine was not completely smashed" and the Communists remained a minority in the new cabinet. The Nazis were still in the Balkans and nothing could be allowed to interfere with the task of

665

expelling them. For this reason, "social transformations" had to be delayed, even to the point of working with "some anti-German elements of the bourgeoisie." Impatient Party members had to be restrained. Even after the Fatherland Front had been "consolidated," Dimitrov admitted, there was a "certain lag" in "revolutionary changes." "We continued," he said, "to speak of the possibility of coördinating the interests of private industrialists and merchants with the general interests of the state." But in the last year and a half fresh progress had been made—a new republican constitution had been adopted, industry nationalized and progress recorded in socializing agriculture. It had finally become possible, also, to let the last "vacillating and unstable" elements in the Fatherland Front "drop off"—or, if they did not do that, to "kick them out." Now at last there had emerged a "mass political organization" suited to the task of "constructing the foundations of Socialism via the people's democracy . . . under the leadership of the working class." Henceforth there was to be "a relentless class struggle against the capitalistic elements, and for their liquidation." Dimitrov did not assert that the end of the road had been reached. Bulgaria and the other new democracies, he simply said, were now "marching toward Socialism . . . creating the conditions necessary for the building of So-

This boiled down to saying that Bulgarian Communism was still in a transitional stage, though a new one of relentless attack against all remaining capitalist elements. The second half of the proposition would have been the impressive point for Dimitrov's Bulgarian audience. It was the first half, however, that the Jugoslav Communists seized upon. What! they jibed, did the Bulgarian and other Cominform Parties still not dare proclaim the dictatorship of the proletariat? Could they still only say that they were "on the way?"

Even so, Dimitrov had talked very differently in more easygoing days. As recently as September 1946, for example, he had addressed a delegation of foreign trade union delegates as follows:

With great satisfaction we acknowledge Comrade Zilliacus' statement that the working class, the English working people represented by the

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Bulgaria EE1

665 Labor Party, are on the way to Socialism and endeavoring to reach it in a peaceful way. . . . I should like to tell our English friend that we too feel that it is quite possible in Bulgaria, granted the work and necessary preparations, to pass on to Socialism some day without dictatorship of the proletariat, on the basis of democracy and a parliamentary régime.

Now, however, the British Labor Party had become a horde of imperialist hyenas, lackeys of Wall Street. Now Socialism was to be attained in Bulgaria not in a peaceful parliamentary way but by force. To make sure that his audience would swallow this strong meat Dimitrov threw in the ominous warning that the program had been developed under the guidance of Stalin himself; he "personally" had helped with advice and explanations so that any "mistakes" which were made could be "corrected quickly."

The Dimitrov talk, though derided in Jugoslavia as postponing indefinitely the advent of Socialism, nevertheless gave notice that the proletarian revolution would now be pushed in Bulgaria by all means and at all costs. Applied to the agrarian problem, it meant that the class war was to begin in earnest in the villages. Collectivization had not proved any more popular with Bulgarian peasants than it had in other agricultural countries. Even at their face value, the official figures of progress in forming collectives (more delicately called "working agricultural enterprises") were not impressive. And one hesitates to accord them face value because of the ample opportunity and great temptation to juggle statistics. Changes are made frequently in the rules for membership, the presidents of village councils (soviets) are desperately anxious to make a good showing in their reports to Sofia, and the Minister of Agriculture himself hopes to save his skin by reporting progress to Moscow.

474 241 423 At the end of 1948, according to a published Soviet source, 73,000 Bulgarian peasant households owning 300,000 hectares of land were joined in 1,000 agricultural coöperatives (collectives); and by August 1, 1949, the figures had become 146,583 households, owning 538,458 hectares, in 1,594 coöperatives.[3] Writing in the official Cominform journal in November 1949, T. Chernokolev, a member of the

[3] N. Vorobyëv, *New Times*, Moscow, September 7, 1949.

648, 665, 642, 433 Bulgaria EEl

[For the economic and political position of Bulgaria under Soviet control since the death of Stalin, see 85: Zinner, Rl Soviet Union, category 116, Pp. 157B-163B.]

113, 665 Bulgaria EE1

[For a discussion of the new statute of the Communist Party of Bulgaria modeled on the statute of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of October 1952 and compared with the party statutes in the other states of the eastern bloc, see E1 Europe, 10: Mehnert, category 116, pp. 1-10]

[For a reprint of the preamble to the statute, see pp. 11-12]